

PBSUCCESS-RYBAT

VIA: AIR

(SPECIFY AIR OR SEA POUCH)

DISPATCH NO.

HGG-A-752

**SECRET**

CLASSIFICATION

TO : Lincoln

DATE: FEB 24 1954

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala

INFO: Chief, WHD

SUBJECT: GENERAL— PBSUCCESS

SPECIFIC— Conversation Concerning Guatemala-U.S. Relations

Attached as of possible interest to Lincoln and Headquarters is one copy of a memorandum prepared by Col. A. E. McCORMICK, Army Attaché, American Embassy, Guatemala City. The memorandum pertains to a conversation between McCORMICK, Colonel Eduardo WEYMANN, Chief of the Presidential Military Staff, and Mrs. Charles SIEMON, sister of President ARBENZ.

Clara M. Heagey

Enclosure:

Memorandum of Conversation

23 February 1954

CMH

Distribution:

2-Line w/att

2-Wash w/att

1-Files w/att

FEB 26 1954

CIA HISTORICAL REVIEW PROGRAM  
RELEASE AS SANITIZED

2003

PBSUCCESS - RYBAT

**SECRET**

CLASSIFICATION

51-28A

F/1-b-483

~~SECRET~~

TO: The Ambassador  
Mr. Krieg  
Colonel Martin  
Mr. Wardlaw  
Mr. Hill

DATE: 15 February 1954

FROM: Colonel A.E. McCormick

SUBJECT: Conversation with Colonel Eduardo WEYMANN, Chief of Presidential Military Staff, and Mrs. Charles SIEMON, Sister of President ARBENZ

1. Introduction - Colonel WEYMANN invited me to his house on the evening of 10 February. Upon his initiation, we had a frank and open discussion of the present situation concerning United States-Guatemalan relations. He and I talked from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., when we were joined by Mrs. SIEMON and Mrs. WEYMANN. The discussion continued until 10:00. Mrs. WEYMANN took no part in the conversation. It is believed that Mrs. SIEMON has an open mind on the subject, for she explained that her loyalties are divided between her Guatemalan brother and her American husband, Mrs. Charles SIEMON. Colonel WEYMANN stated that he desired to be a purely off-the-record discussion and that it not go any further. Mrs. SIEMON also requested, since she never discusses politics with her brother, that her opinions be considered purely personal and not go any further, as she would be extremely unhappy if this matter came to her brother's attention.

2. Apprehension Over present Situation - Colonel WEYMANN opened the discussion by stating that he was at a loss to understand why such an impasse should exist between the two countries and that he certainly hoped something could be done to solve the problem, to which I heartily agreed. He stated that during his entire four years in Washington, as the Guatemalan Military Attache, he was continually frustrated in all of his efforts to deal with the State Department. He concluded that the State Department's policy was largely dictated and influenced by the major American interests here in Guatemala, particularly the United Fruit Company. He maintained that he could prove through his friends in the United States that John Moors Cabot and Secretary Dulles had interest in the United Fruit Company's business. This I promptly denied and requested proof of same, informing him that not only were all Government officials forbidden to have outside interests that might prejudice their positions but that in addition, all diplomatic representatives were likewise prohibited from having any financial interests in the countries to which they were accredited.

3. Communism - Neither he nor Mrs. SIEMON could understand the United States' preoccupation with the few Communists in Guatemala. They reasoned that all Communists were known here and could be readily apprehended; that there were many more Communists in other countries, in-

cluding the United States, where the problem had assumed more serious proportions; that they were just members of another political party and, since this was a democratic government, it had to permit all elements to voice their political sentiments. Colonel WEYMANN explained the various leading Communists' trips to countries behind the Iron Curtain and to Moscow as meetings for which they received direct invitations from those countries and said he was quite sure they would similarly honor such invitations from the United States; that these men were honest, hard-working individuals who had only the improvement of the standard of living in Guatemala as their objective. In order to bear this out, he was extremely anxious to have me visit the areas in which Agrarian Reform was being administered so that I could see at first-hand how the standard of living of the individual campesino had been improved through the acquisition of the land, and how false were all the reports of the independent press concerning the mis-administration of the Agraria Law. In addition, he would also like to arrange a party at his house so that I would have the opportunity of meeting and talking with the leading Communists and, thereby, see for myself just what type of individuals they were. In reply to this I explained that the Communist Party here represented the world-wide, Soviet-dominated and operated Communist organization. Through its press, propaganda and conferences it was dictating the line that the Guatemalan Communist Party should follow; that the Communist Manifesto enunciated the eventual objective of subjugating the entire free world; that the various phases of Communist Party development in this country were consistent with the pattern which had been carried out in the Satellite Countries of Europe and in China, and that if permitted to continue, would result in the eventual control of Guatemala by the Communists at a time that was considered opportune by them. I emphasized, therefore, that actually the real foreign intervention in Guatemala at this time was that which was being exercised by the Kremlin through its Guatemalan Communist Party.

4. President ARBENZ - Mrs. SIEMON pointed out that her brother was a hard-working, honest soldier; that by taking the present course he was undertaking the more difficult program which he considered necessary for Guatemala; that it would be very easy for him to cater to the wishes of the wealthy elements in Guatemala and, thereby, enhance his own financial standing. She emphasized that he was not a wealthy man and was actually having financial difficulties; that he was obliged to go along with the so-called Communist element because it was the only faction supporting his program; that this support had been turned down by the wealthy elements in the country, the anti-Communists and the foreign interests. She expressed the hope that somehow Guatemala and the United States could overcome their present differences and added that she thought this could only be done by direct contact with the President by senior officials of our government.

5. Expulsion of Correspondents Marshall BANNELL and Sydney GRUSON - Both Colonel WEYMANN and Mrs. SIEMON were vehement on this subject and stated that Guatemala could no longer tolerate the lies and false reports

these correspondents had dispatched to the U.S. press. At this point, Colonel WEYMANN presented me with a copy of the last cable that Mr. BANNELL had sent concerning the purchase of a yacht by the President, in which WEYMANN had been the intermediary. He cited this as a specific example of false reporting and said it was completely unfounded.

6. The Caracas Conference - Colonel WEYMANN stated definitely that Guatemala would attend the Conference. I asked why Guatemala was the only Latin American country which had opposed placing the Communist issue on the Caracas agenda and, also, if there was no Communist problem here, why did Guatemala fear the official discussion of this topic earlier by the ODECA. He replied that Guatemala's reasons were that the United Fruit Company was taking this means to eliminate all Latin American opposition to their interests; that it was very easy for the United Fruit Company to label all opposition "Communists" and, thereby, squelch further opposition to their exploitation of these countries.

7. Official U.S. Position with Regard to Guatemala - I explained to them what the official United States' attitude was concerning Communism and cited the speech which Senator Alexander WILEY delivered in the Senate, enumerating the 22 points proving the existence of Communism in Guatemala. They appeared to be only vaguely acquainted with the speech and dismissed it as more United Fruit Company-instigated propaganda.

8. Coffee - WEYMANN pointed out that as specific evidence of Guatemala's esteem, respect and friendship for the United States, it was selling practically all of its coffee to the U.S. at a time when it could easily dispose of this coffee in the European market. I told him that I found this extremely difficult to understand in that I was sure Guatemalan businessmen were astute enough to sell their coffee in whatever market yielded the greatest profit and was most convenient to them.

9. Minister of Foreign Affairs - WEYMANN explained that Minister OSEGUEDA was replaced by TORIELLO because the President felt that OSEGUEDA had permitted U.S. relations to steadily deteriorate and that TORIELLO's appointment was designed to improve relations between the two countries.

10. Guatemalan Armed Forces - WEYMANN stated that of all the Central American countries, only Guatemala's Armed Forces were modeled after those of the U.S. To his way of thinking, this was additional evidence of Guatemala's trust in and admiration for the U.S.

11. Official U.S. Representation in Guatemala - WEYMANN stated that the official U.S. representation in Guatemala, including the Army and Air Missions, is larger than that in any other Central American country and, therefore, the U.S. should be well-informed on the actual

situation existing in Guatemala. He found it difficult for us to be misled by the false propaganda that was being published in the U.S. press. I replied that the U.S. was well-informed and well-aware of the existing situation and, for that reason, had come to its present conclusions concerning the threat of the Communist menace here.

12. Recent Plot to Overthrow the Guatemalan Government - WEYMANN could not understand why the U.S. State Department had been so prompt to deny "acquiescence of the government of the north". He said that this could have referred to Mexico and not the U.S., but the State Department's assumption that this information referred to the U.S. was further evidence that possibly the U.S. had been involved. This, of course, I denied.

COMMENTS:

1. I feel quite certain that this discussion was pre-meditated on the part of WEYMANN since this is the first occasion on which he has ever "opened up". His prompt production of the copy of Marshall BANNELL's cable concerning the purchase of the yacht would further tend to confirm this.

2. It was obvious from their eager and open discussion of the present situation that they are extremely apprehensive about it. They both stated that they felt that one of the greatest difficulties was that there was not sufficient frank and open discussion between responsible individuals from both countries and that the greatest danger at the present was that the press and misinformed intermediaries were clouding the real issues. The shallowness of their arguments and their apparent naivete concerning the world-wide implications of Communism would indicate that they are completely taken in by the Guatemalan Communist Party line. I believe that the discussion was worthwhile and that I planted in their minds some serious food for thought over the vital issue between the U.S. and Guatemala, and that my explanation of the official U.S. attitude will certainly be conveyed to other Guatemalan officials.

3. WEYMANN is involved in a deal with Charles SIEMON to act as agents in Guatemala for Argentine films. It is reliably reported that he has ambitions for the Presidency; that he would like to return to Washington as Attacheor Ambassador, as his wife is fed up with the situation here. The fact that he is very much a playboy and self-considered ladies' man may account for her dissatisfaction. WEYMANN owns a home in Washington and has other U.S. investments. The home is the one he occupied prior to his departure from Washington in September of last year. He wants to rent it furnished for \$300 per month and has requested my assistance in this matter.

COPY

~~SECRET~~  
- 5 -

4. WEYMANN repeated several times that because of his previous experience as an attache, he was well-aware of the duties of an Attache and offered his services to assist me in any problem I might have. Upon explaining to him that I had been requested by Colonel PARRINELLO to conduct all of my business through the G-2 of the Guatemalan General Staff, he replied that that was simply the formal way to conduct business but that he was available at my convenience.

~~SECRET~~